



LIFE SATISFACTION AND SPIRITUALITY AMONG DEPRESSED ELDERS

Dr. Paras Jain

Director, Silicobyte Katni Degree College, Dikshabhumi Campus, Adharkap, Katni (M.P)-483501.

ABSTRACT

Depression is a common problem in old age and cause of emotional hurts which decreases quality in life. A feeling of satisfaction with life is an important factor for a general sense of well being. Life satisfaction and spirituality are important to come out from depression. Spirituality has been referred to as the important dimension of the mental health care. In present study relationship of life satisfaction with spirituality in depressed elders has been searched.

KEYWORDS: Life Satisfaction, Spirituality, Depression.

INTRODUCTION:

In the condition of depression, many patients are found to be irritable and socially withdrawn. The feeling of hopelessness and sadness is mostly associated with suicidal ideation. Some special features found in later life are depression, high emotions, prominent cognitive complaints, prominent somatic complaints, unexplained health worries, pain, and loss of interest in activities. Depression may combine with other physical and psychiatric conditions especially in old age.

Life satisfaction is related to the attitudes that individuals have towards their past, present as well as future in relation to their psychological well being. It implies personal contentment with life and positive regard includes a personal appraisal of fulfilling one's social role and obligations. Successful aging includes low probability of disease, disability, high cognitive and physical functional capability and active engagement with life.

Researchers suggested that married older people were high on life satisfaction scale as compared to the widow/ widower or bachelor, divorcee older persons. The result showed that the older persons with family have proved to be most satisfied psychologically and socially. Gender significantly affects satisfaction level. Happiness in old age depends on busy life, good health, absence of feeling of lack of funds, having life partner and social contacts. Economic status is also an important factor for old age persons.

Spirituality refers to a religious process of reinforcement which aims to recover the original shape of man oriented at the image of god. It is linked to inner experience and concerned with existential questions like meaning and aim of life. Spirituality is personal, a matter of life and matter of connecting god, self journey which builds up and expands as the daily life experiences. It is recognized as an essential aspect of life, an innate, dimension of human functioning. Religious and spiritual traditions, practices and rituals are based on very deep insight in life. Spirituality of a person is also reflected through creative efforts as painting, drawing, poetry, singing, dance etc.

In the field of psychotherapy, spirituality is important as it made people stronger emotionally, more resilient and more mature. It helps in alleviating all kinds of distress i.e., mental, emotional and physical. The spiritual approach fosters a more positive growth; spiritual awareness encourages calm in the place of anxiety and hope. Religious involvement is associated with lower levels of depression, anxiety and suicidal and with higher level of well being.

Objective of Study:

- To study level of life satisfaction among depressed elder persons
- To study level of spirituality among depressed elder persons
- To study inter relationship between life satisfaction and spirituality for depressed elder persons

Hypothesis:

There is no significant finding of life satisfaction among depressed elder persons

There is no significant finding of spirituality among depressed elder persons

There is no significant inter relationship between life satisfaction and spirituality for depressed elder persons

METHODOLOGY:

Descriptive survey method was applied for study. 200 old aged persons selected for study. First of all they were tested for finding of depression and a self prepared questionnaire was used. Score 0-10 represented as normal condition, 11-15 as mild depression, 16-20 as clinical depression, 21-25 as moderate and 31-40 as severe level depression. Data is presented in table 1. Persons having depression above 21 point were selected for further study.

Depressed subjects were taken for life satisfaction test. In this test, score between 31-60, show very low satisfaction, 61-90 low satisfaction, 91-120 average satisfaction, above 120 high satisfactions.

These depressed subjects were tested for spirituality. Score between 25-50 show very low status, 51-75 low, 76-100 moderate and above 100 high level spirituality.

Table-1
Status of Depression among old Age Persons

Depression Status	No. of Patients (%)	
	Male	Female
Normal	17	6
Clinical	23	26
Moderate	32	35
Severe	28	33

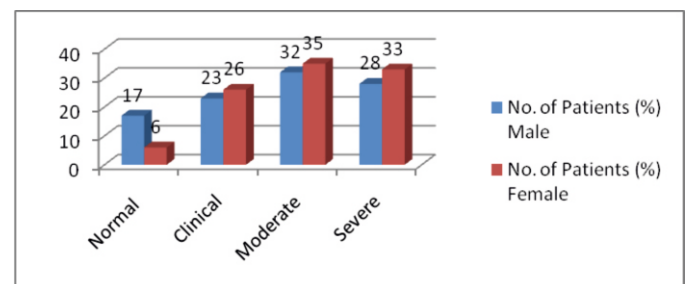


Chart-1: Status of Depression among old Age Persons

Table-2
Status of Life Satisfaction among Depressed Old Age Persons

Life Satisfaction Value →	No. of Depressed Old Age Persons			
	Very Low	Low	Average	High
Male	7	28	36	29
Female	14	26	34	26

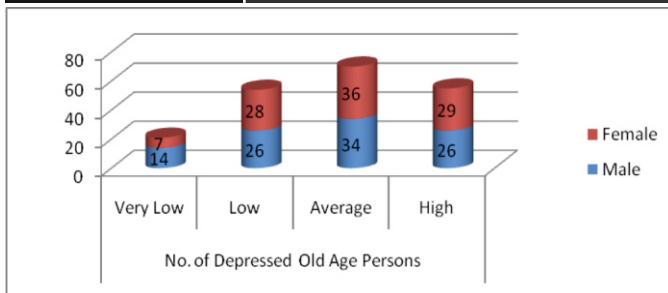


Chart-2: Status of Life Satisfaction among Depressed Old Age Persons

Table-3
Status of Spirituality among Depressed Old Age Persons

Spirituality Value →	No. of Depressed Old Age Persons			
	Very Low	Low	Average	High
Male	5	18	36	41
Female	12	23	31	34

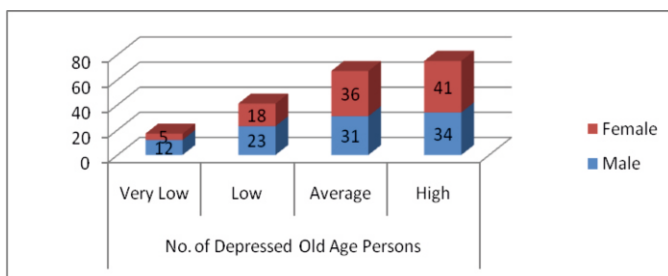


Chart-3: Status of Spirituality among Depressed Old Age Persons

Table-4
Relationship between Life Satisfaction and Spirituality among Depressed Old Age Persons

Life Satisfaction Value	No. of Depressed Old Age Persons			
	Very Low Spiritual Value	Low Spiritual Value	Average Spiritual Value	High Spiritual Value
Very Low	27	31	24	18
Low	26	29	26	19
Average	23	27	29	21
High	21	22	33	24

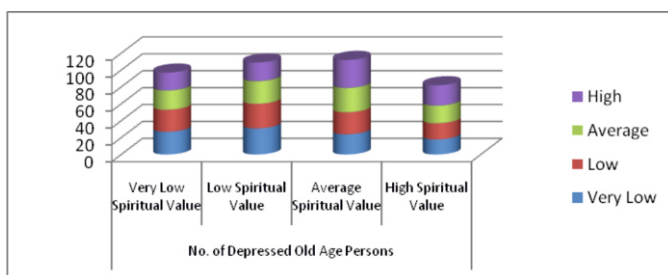


Chart-4: Relationship between Life Satisfaction and Spirituality among Depressed Old Age Persons

Among old age person 28% male and 33% females are under severe depression. Moderate depression found in 32% male and 35% females. Clinical depression has been noted in 23% male and 26% female. Under normal depression, 17% male and 6% female are searched. Gender wise comparison shows that no. of depressed female is higher than male old age persons.

Among depressed old age persons 29% male and 26% female showed high life satisfaction, 36% male and 34% female are observed under average level life satisfaction category while 28% male and 26% female belong low life satisfaction. Under very low life satisfaction 7% male and 14% females are searched. Thus hypothesis 1 there is no significant finding of life satisfaction among depressed elder persons is rejected. Data indicates that high life satisfaction found in male more than female.

Spirituality plays important role to come out from depression. Spirituality test result shows that males have high spirituality than females. High spirituality

remarked in 41% male and 34% female while average level spirituality have been exhibited by 36% male and 31% female. Low spirituality marked in 18% male and 23% female. Hypothesis 2 there is no significant finding of spirituality among depressed elder persons is rejected.

Relationship between life satisfaction and spirituality shows that both are directly proportional to each other. Hypothesis 3 there is no significant inter relationship between life satisfaction and spirituality for depressed elder persons is rejected. For very low life satisfaction, 27% old age persons have and very low spirituality. 31% low spirituality, 24% average spirituality and 18% high spirituality. 24s% persons are marked as high life satisfied and high spirituality. In this category 33% observed as average spiritual, 22% low spiritual and 21% as very low spiritual.

CONCLUSION:

To come out from depression, life satisfaction is necessary and for satisfaction, spirituality is important. Elder persons who found high depressed, found to have low level life satisfaction and spirituality. Old persons having high spirituality have high life satisfaction and very low depression. This study concludes that spirituality is best way to solve psychological problems of old age.

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